

Environmental Quality Commission  
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Betsy Bennett, Vice-Chair, Louisville  
Patty Wallace, Louisa  
Robert Riddle, Midway  
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Jean Dorton, Paintsville



**ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMISSION**

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January 24, 2002

The Honorable Paul E. Patton  
State Capitol  
Frankfort, KY 40601

Dear Governor Patton,

The Environmental Quality Commission would like to express its grave concern regarding a proposal to relocate an endangered species to accommodate a coal mining operation.

At issue is the "reluctant" approval by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service of a strip mining plan in Knox County to relocate the Blackside Dace prior to mining by Core Management Inc. Such an action sets a dangerous precedent that will set back efforts to protect Kentucky's endangered species and their habitat.

The *2000-2001 State of Kentucky's Environment* report reveals that we continue to lose ground when it comes to conserving our natural resources. The number of threatened and endangered species in Kentucky has climbed from 34 in 1997 to 42 in 1999. We must do more to protect our wild species and the state's biodiversity.

The commission urges a rigorous assessment of this proposed project as part of the state's surface mining and water quality permitting program with particular attention to the fact that this is an outstanding resource water that should be protected. We hope that this matter can be resolved without relocation or impact to the Blackside Dace and its natural habitat.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Aloma W. Dew".

Aloma Dew, Chair

Cc: Secretary James E. Bickford  
Senator Jim Bunning



Celebrating 30 years of protecting Kentucky's environment